"HITLER'S AIRPORT" TO BECOME GERMANY'S BIGGEST REFUGEE CENTRE

News / Airports / Routes

Plans are underway to turn "Hitler's airport" - the iconic Tempelhof in Berlin that is now an abandoned listed building - into Germany's biggest refugee centre.

As Germany is poised to accept as many as 800,000 refugees this year, city authorities confirmed they are studying plans to turn the airport into a giant home for asylum seekers.

Once described by architect Sir Norman Foster as the 'mother of all airports,' the site could be converted into homes for up to 4,000 people.

Berlin state's health and social affairs agency has requested the city's interior ministry for permission to use the building.

A team set up by the city to administer the influx of refugees has already visited the site and is

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expected to greenlight the building accommodation purposes.

Christian Hanke, mayor of Berlin's Mitte district, expressed his support for the idea of housing refugees at the old airport.

"It is an emergency solution, but it is unavoidable. There is a lot of room in the hangars." he said.

The airport was closed as a working airport against the wishes of Berliners nearly a decade ago.

Spanning over 300,000 square metres, the airport has a 1.23 km roof which covers the airport's main hangers.

Tempelhof airport was where Adolf Hitler delivered his famous May Day speech whilst holding the role of Chancellor.

The airport was rarely used by the Luftwaffe during the war and was largely kept closed except for ceremonial occasions.

The airport is best known for the its vital role in the Berlin blockade, where an estimate 4,500 tons supplies were airlifted into West Germany following the Soviet Union's decision to prevent access.

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